



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Lava Beds National
Monument

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Lava Beds National Monument News Release

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For Immediate Release

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Early Spring Flowers Blooming at the Lava Beds

Spring is here and with it are the early blooms of wildflowers in the park. Two locations are best for flower viewing this time of year: the Gillems Bluff trail leaving the parking area just behind the main entrance station and the trail up Schonchin Butte.

On the Gillems Bluff trail, be on the lookout for two beautiful flowers in the lily family. The Yellow Bells (*Fritillaria pudica*) are up, showing off their nodding yellow bell-shaped flowers just under an inch long that turn from golden yellow to red as they age. More common are the white star-shaped blooms of the Sand Lily (*Leucocrinum montanum*), growing low to the ground and displaying showy clusters of flowers. Both are found on the upper half of the trail before reaching the top of the bluff.

The other spot to check is the trail that climbs the side of Schonchin Butte, which begins at the end a gravel road accessible to regular passenger cars, just a few miles north of the park's Visitor Center. The first flower you will encounter just 300 feet up the trail on your right is the radiant yellow Sage Buttercup (*Ranunculus glaberrimus*), one of our earliest spring blooms. As you press on to near the top of the butte, keep an eye out for the Desert Violet (*Viola purpurea* subsp. *venosa*). Desert Violet has a classic violet shape and is yellow with purple streaking on the lower petal.

Images available online for reproduction:

<http://www.nps.gov/archive/labe/press/photos/flowers/>

Lava Beds intends to distribute regular press releases throughout the spring and early summer as various species of wildflowers bloom, with links to images posted online and information on the best locations to view them. More information is available from park staff.

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